

BRIEFS

REGISTRATION STARTS FOR SBC ANNUAL MEET

DALLAS (BP) — Messenger and child care registration are open for the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) 2018 annual meeting this summer at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Dallas. Registration will be available around the clock at sbcanualmeeting.net for messengers and invited guests. The annual meeting is a private religious gathering open to registered messengers, invited guests of messengers, program participants, and approved exhibitors. Each messenger will receive an eight-digit registration code to present at the annual meeting's Express Registration lane in Dallas.

Child Care

Giant Cow Children's Ministries and Youth on Mission will be held in conjunction with the SBC Pastors' Conference June 10-11 and the SBC's June 12-13 annual meeting, both in Dallas. Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR) child care volunteers will care for preschoolers while Giant Cow Children's Ministries will lead five-12 year olds and Woman's Missionary Union will guide the Youth on Mission curricula and activities. All activities for children and youth will be housed at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, the annual meeting site. Youth who have completed grades seven-12 will begin their days at the convention center with worship each morning before going into the community for hands-on mission projects. Pre-registration is required and will be handled online only at sbcanualmeeting.net under the "children/youth" tab. The deadline for registration is May 11 for most programs, or when the space limitation of 125 children is reached. There will be no on-site registration.

2018 STATE EVANGELISM CONFERENCE



HERE TO WORSHIP — Mississippi Baptists turned out in the hundreds for praise and inspiration during the 2018 Mississippi Baptist State Evangelism Conference Jan. 28-29 at Brandon Church, Brandon. (Photo by Tony Martin)

Gathering revives, refreshes

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

Hundreds of participants gathered January 28-29 at Brandon Church, Brandon, for the 2018 Mississippi Baptist State Evangelism Conference sponsored by the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

"This gives Mississippi Baptists a chance to get together for nothing but worship and fellowship," said Don Lum, evangelism director for the Mississippi Baptist Con-

vention Board (MBCB). "They got to see friends, eat together, hear speakers that God will use to challenge them, and have their lives refreshed."

"This was once considered a pastors' event and it still is to some extent, but really it is for all Mississippi Baptists. We love for pastors to bring their church members with them. It helps the church and the pastors as people get revived. There were a number of churches here this year."

Conference speakers this year included:

■ Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Church in New Orleans and the first African American president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

■ Bob Pittman of Bob Pittman Ministries in Muscle Shoals, Al.

■ Mississippi native Michael Catt, pastor of Sherwood Church in Albany, Ga., that produced successful Christian motion pictures such as *Facing the Giants* and *Fireproof*.

■ Steve Gaines, pastor of

see SEC on p. 6

Guidestone: Rough ride coming for investments

DALLAS (BP and local reports) — Financial markets volatility like Monday's 1,175-point drop in the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) may continue to buffet the financial markets in 2018, according to retirement account assessments by leaders of GuideStone Financial Services, an agency of the Southern Baptist Convention headquartered in Dallas.

"Volatility was incredibly muted in 2017," observed David S. Spika, chief strategic investment officer of GuideStone, but he's cautious about 2018. The Monday free-fall for the DJIA was the deepest of all time. The 666-point drop on Feb. 2 was the sixth-worst of all time.

"There is a market precedent for volatility to soon increase," Spika was quoted as predicting before the 1,175-point loss. "This period has been the longest period without a five percent correction in history. In fact, five percent pullbacks have occurred, on average, three times a year since 1928."

Retirement plan participants should not see volatility as a reason to flee the markets but rather to ensure they remain focused on their long-term asset allocation, Spika said.

see INVESTMENTS on p. 7

Miss. Baptist leaders pray for legislators



Jim Futral (left), executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, greets Randy Boyd, a member of the Mississippi House of Representatives from Mantachie, at the Jan. 22 Legislative Prayer Breakfast in the Skyroom of the Baptist Building in Jackson. Boyd, a legislator since 2012, represents portions of Itawamba and Lee counties. The long-time annual event, sponsored by the Christian Action Commission of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, is conducted as a prayer gathering for legislators at the start of their annual session and is free of politics. (Photo by Elwin Williams)

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

Why do they hate us?

The world has always been a brutal place for Christians. Jesus Himself warned of the consequences of following Him (Matt. 10:22; Luke 6:22). As it has been from the beginning, so it is today.

We tend to think of the Middle East as the current hot spot for Christian persecution, but we needn't forget what's going on in many other parts of the world, too. News reports indicate that a 33-year-old, North Korean mother of three was publicly executed before her family for the crime of giving away Bibles in that country.

She was apparently not a big-time Bible smuggler, but simply a believer who wanted to share the Good News with others as opportunities arose. Not only was Ri Hyon Ok killed for her Bible offenses, her parents, husband, and children were condemned to the communist country's dreaded prison system.

That's the rule in North Korea — if you offend the totalitarian dictatorship, your family pays the price along with you.

Another Christian woman vanished from the same area near the border with China, and her husband and children have not been seen now for some time. It is assumed that she suffered the same fate as Ri Hyon Ok, and that her family is somewhere in the forlorn vastness of the North Korean gulag.

Reliable statistics are hard to come by, but observers believe there are less than 30,000 believers left in the country of 25 million people that was once known as the "Jerusalem of the East" for its widespread Christian practices.

That was then. Now there is reportedly a special prison camp in North Korea to which Christians are condemned for exceptionally harsh treatment by the regime.

In the African nation of Somalia, the leader of a Muslim extremist group has declared, "All Somali Christians must be killed according to the Islamic law." Sheikh Nur Barud also said sharia (Islamic) law does not recognize Christian converts and "we will slaughter them."

True to his word, an Italian nun known as the "Mother Teresa of Africa" for her thirty years of

work in Somalia was murdered outside the children's hospital she founded. A British husband and wife helping to educate Somali children were gunned down in front of the school they started. There have been multiple reports of beatings of Christians.

Christians in the volatile Indian state of Orissa no longer publicly celebrate Christmas, due to killings and persecutions perpetrated by Hindu extremists. Christians are reportedly able to remain in their homes only if they convert to Hindu when extremist thugs show up at their door. A Christian woman who was driven away but returned from a refugee camp was murdered in short order.

Why are Christians seen as such a threat to so many who would use such extreme violence to silence them? The answer can be found in the Bible, and in world history.

When people experience the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ, are baptized in His name, and subsequently filled with the Holy Spirit, they fear no earthly power. As a matter of fact, their boldness and righteousness become objects of fear to enemies of the faith, who clearly understand how the very name of Jesus can transform entire populations.

That's why they're so quick to seek to snuff out Christianity wherever they can. They know what will happen if it's allowed to spread. Satan certainly understands that reality and will use any weapon at his disposal to stop that from happening.

From inside our comfortable American churches, let us pray for these bold, righteous Christians around the world who fully understand their fate and yet continue to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. From inside our secure homes, let us pray for their families, who are often made to endure cruelty and suffering along with their offending relative.

From deep within our souls, let us pray that Jesus will be glorified always and all ways, because we know evil will flee before His face.

After what Jesus did for us — and what these brave Christians are doing for Him — we can do no less.

I'm no accident

The incomparable Christian writer Elisabeth Elliot once said, "The fact that I am a woman doesn't make me a different kind of Christian, but the fact that I am a Christian makes me a different kind of woman."

My identity as a woman is no accident. As I study Scripture, I see the intentional differences God designed between male and female, the relational dynamic between them, and the distinct responsibilities both men and women have in His church — all for the display of His glory and grace.

As equal image-bearers of the divine (Gen. 1:26-29), our minds are worth the investment in theological education, in all its rigor and depth. This belief does not contradict my complementarian convictions. Rather, it expresses them.

We women are hard-wired for community with other women. It's part of what makes the genius of Titus 2:3-5 so enduring. We learn in community. It isn't enough simply to study theories of biblical gender roles or a theology of womanhood. We instinctively want to see those theories lived out in the context of woman-to-woman relationships. We look for other women who exemplify their convictions in every sphere of life.

Looking back on my years as a seminary student, it wasn't just the content of my courses that shaped and formed my perspective. It was the community. I discovered a community of women who challenged each other to think, grapple with an argument, analyze a theory, and articulate a theological position.

We were a community of women who pushed each other to love the Lord with all our minds and to devote ourselves to standing under the authority of His Word without compromise (Mark 12:30-31).

Ten years later, I am teaching a new cohort of female students. The world they inherit seems far more hostile and broken than just a decade ago.

Now, perhaps more than ever, we desperately need theologically grounded women who will devote themselves to God's precepts and become all that He designed them to be.

We desperately need theologically grounded women who can respond to cultural tidal waves like the #MeToo movement, who are armed with a theology of women's dignity that doesn't look to transient social solutions for pervasive spiritual ills.



Guest opinion
with Katie McCoy

We desperately need theologically grounded women who will cut through well-intended yet misguided attempts to conflate male-female equality with the tenets of secular ideology, who can uphold the worth of every woman without painting Jesus as a first-century feminist.

We desperately need theologically grounded women who can articulate sound doctrine on human sexuality with compassion and clarity, who will not shrink from Scripture's teaching on sexual ethics in a world that is increasingly sexually enslaved.

We desperately need theologically grounded women who will take up the culture-transforming ministries of our spiritual foremothers, who will advocate for the unborn, for the poor and the oppressed, and who will labor for the spiritual growth of those for whom they are responsible.

Drawing from Scripture, we desperately need theologically grounded women who can confront ungodliness with prophetic truth like Huldah (2 Kings 22:14-20; 2 Chron. 34:22-28), spur leaders to faith-filled action like Deborah (Judges 4-5); diffuse volatility with spiritual wisdom like Abigail (1 Sam. 25); and nurture with doctrinal precision like Priscilla (Acts 18:24-26).

The theological education of women within a community of women truly is a worthy investment.

That we are "equal yet different" is not a trivial platitude. It is a principle that energizes our intellectual pursuits as a means of worshipping the God whose image we bear.

McCoy (biblicalwomen.com) is assistant professor of theology in women's studies at the College at Southwestern, the undergraduate school of Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth. Her commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style and length.

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Southern Baptists' long journey into the light

NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — In 1845, at the Southern Baptist Convention's founding, approximately one in three Southern Baptist church members was African American. Fifty-five years later, there were virtually no black Southern Baptists.

Today, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) — which finally acknowledged, repented of, and apologized for its racial sins in 1995 and elected its first African American president in 2012 — enjoys fellowship with 3,400 predominately African American congregations.

The story behind modern Southern Baptists' sincere corporate effort at reconciliation, historians say, is a remarkable narrative of slavery, sin, emancipation, struggle, and God's grace — and a challenge for the SBC to do more in terms of racial reconciliation.

"The SBC today is at a crossroads," said Gateway Seminary professor Leroy Gainey, one of the first African Americans to join an SBC seminary faculty in the mid-1980s. Although race relationships remain strained in some areas of disagreement, "I do believe in our convention, and I do believe we can do the right thing," he said.

Together, not equal

When southern slaveholders and slavery sympathizers established the SBC in 1845, about 100,000 of the 350,000 Southern Baptist church members were African American, according to Baptist historian William Whittitt's estimate published in the 1895 SBC Annual.

The estimate was based on Whittitt's extrapolation backward from 1852 statistics compiled by Baptist statistician J.L. Burrows.

Mostly slaves, those black Southern Baptists often were allowed to vote on matters of church discipline and admission of new members to their churches, wrote Southern Seminary historian Greg Wills in his book, *Democratic Religion*. They also served on church committees and were recognized as messengers by some Baptist associations.

In some churches, black membership dwarfed that of whites, wrote Baylor University historians Thomas Kidd and Barry Hankins in *Baptists in America*, citing as examples First Church in Natchez; First Church in Richmond, Va.; and First Church in Montgomery, Al.

Still, Southern Baptist churches expressed their belief in the "social inferiority of African Americans" by making them sit in the worst seats during worship and treating them "like children," wrote Wills, dean of Southern Seminary's school of theology.

Gainey, the J.M. Frost Professor of Educational Leadership



HOUSE DIVIDED — In this early photograph (above) that has no date or location, a white Southern Baptist evangelist baptizes African Americans into the Christian faith and the Southern Baptist Convention. By 1845, nearly one in three Southern Baptists was African American. However, the racial hatred soon worked to drive the races apart and into separate churches. Beginning in the 1950s, African American churches began to cooperate with the SBC again. (At left) Twenty-Eighth Street Baptist Church of Louisville, Ky., was not Southern Baptist but its pastor, Emmanuel McCall (front row, far left), became the first black staff member at the SBC Home Mission Board in 1968. (Photos courtesy of Southern Baptist Historical Library & Archives)

at Gateway Seminary in suburban Los Angeles, said many of those slave church members likely were forced to be a part of the church and received incomplete biblical teaching, including sermons and Bible lessons aimed at maintaining subservience on the plantation.

Much of African Americans' spiritual growth, Gainey said, occurred in "hush harbors," secret churches in the woods that taught the whole counsel of God.

Consequently, when slaves gained their freedom at the end of the Civil War, black Southern Baptists "looked for a comparable emancipation in their church life," wrote Baptist historian David Bebbington in *Baptists Through the Centuries*.

Reduced by half

Black Southern Baptists built their own churches beginning in the late 1860s, and many of those churches cooperated with white associations and state conventions. In the 1880s, for example, black Southern Baptist churches constituted a majority of congregations in cooperation with the Florida Baptist Convention, according to a 1985 issue of *Ethnicity*, a publication of the Baptist Sunday School Board (now

LifeWay Christian Resources) intended to express a black Southern Baptist perspective.

Soon, however, African Americans began to form their own state conventions beginning with North Carolina in 1866 and their own national conventions, including the National Baptist Convention of the United States of America in 1895.

New Orleans Seminary historian Lloyd Harsch told Baptist Press (BP) the SBC may have "lost half its membership when African Americans left to form their own organizations."

In 1880, the SBC reported nearly 1.7 million members in cooperating churches, according to statistical tables published in the Baptist Sunday School Board's 1992 *Southern Baptist Handbook*.

The number dropped to 934,000 by 1883 and did not rise back to 1880 levels until 1901 despite strong baptisms numbers during that period, Harsch said.

"I am convinced that the primary reason [for the drop] is the loss of African American members," he said.

Statistical estimates published in SBC Annuals do not indicate the 1880s numerical decreases asserted by Sunday School Board statisticians. Nevertheless, Eth-

nicity, echoing the estimate of some scholars, surmised that "all of the black churches probably had withdrawn from the convention by 1900."

The return begins

The SBC remained virtually all white until 1951, when two black churches, one in California and the other in Alaska, were received into local Southern Baptist associations and soon thereafter began cooperating with the SBC.

The Redwood Empire Baptist Association in northern California received Community Baptist Church into fellowship despite urgings not to do so by the then-executive director of the California Southern Baptist Convention and the then-president of the SBC, according to Gateway Seminary professor Rick Durst in a 2004 article for the *Journal of African American Southern Baptist History*.

What's more, Community Church was received only when associational moderator Norris Fulfer broke a 37-37 tie vote, wrote Durst, director of Gateway's San Francisco campus.

When death threats came to Fulfer, he replied, "You can kill me, but you cannot kill what was

done," according to a 2001 interview with Durst.

In a smoother welcome, Great Friendship Baptist Church in Anchorage was received into its local Chugach Baptist Association without a dissenting vote and began cooperating with the SBC.

Numbers increase

Despite African American struggles against Jim Crow laws and other forms of virulent racism, three decades later the number of predominately African American Southern Baptist churches had increased to 600 with 100,000 members, BP reported in 1981.

Gainey said one key factor in those gains was efforts by the SBC's Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board) to build and strengthen ties with black Baptists.

Another three decades later, in 2009, there were 3,434 predominately African American Southern Baptist churches with nearly 854,000 members, according to a 2014 report by the African American Advisory Council appointed by SBC Executive Committee President Frank S. Page.

Louisiana pastor Fred Luter served as the SBC's first African American president from 2012-2014, and more than 20 African Americans have been elected president of Baptist state conventions, according to a 2012 survey of state conventions by SBC LIFE, the journal of the SBC Executive Committee.

While SBC leaders of all races have agreed more ethnic diversity is needed on convention boards and committees, about 12 to 25 percent of individuals elected to convention boards and committees and/or appointed to committees by the SBC president from 2012-17 were non-Anglo, according to SBC Annuals and BP reports.

Byron Day, president of the convention's National African American Fellowship, told BP the SBC has become "a convention that must take advantage of its diversity and all that every group can bring to the table."

The convention "must better foster unity in diversity," said Day, pastor of Emmanuel Church in Laurel, Md. He believes there remains "a need to be intentional in involving, in this case, African Americans in leadership — whether it be in our Executive Committee, whether it be in our entities."

Black History Month, occurring during the month of February in secular quarters, should inspire Southern Baptists to consider the need for greater ethnic involvement, Day said. A black history emphasis is needed "because it's so easy to not remember where we've come from."

"You can't take it back." Those were the words of a high-tech wizard who was talking on TV about texting and e-mailing and all the other electronic ways we communicate today. He was underscoring the fact that if you send a text message or an e-mail or an Instagram and then decide you want to delete it, someone can undelete it. Once you put it out there, it's out there and a person or an organization with a little knowledge will be able to find it and retrieve it.

He was referring specifically to the latest Washington, D.C., scandal that's swirling around supposedly missing and now retrieved e-mails and texts between two folks who were working for the FBI, but the high-tech wizard could have been making the same observations about Hillary's missing e-mails on the private server in her home or a case involving some criminal who got caught because of the use of an electronic device or devices.

In the case of the FBI personnel, news reports indicate there were over 50,000 missing texts that were lost, gone. Suddenly, those messages began to reappear when experts started looking for them. When those messages were found and retrieved, it became obvious as to the reason someone wanted them to disappear. As I listened to the high-tech wizard talk about the world in which we live and all the things related to the exchange of information and the unbelievable things that people send back and forth and say and do, I was again riveted by his words: "You can't take it back."

It's out there somewhere, forever. God has told us all along that is a true



It's Out There

statement. **The realization** is that what we say and do is open to God. In Hebrews 4:13, a cautionary word is written and folks back in the day may have wondered how such could be: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

It doesn't matter if you try to hide like Adam and Eve or cover up your sin like King David attempted to do. All things are clearly seen by the eyes of God. We sometimes think there are secret sins no one knows. Wrong. God always sees our sins.

The Old Testament writer was right when he gave the word from God, "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23). As a youngster, I used to hear that verse and think it meant

my mother or dad was going to find out my sins. No, it means your sins will find you out. The guilt, the burden, the uncertainty, the fear of our own personal sinfulness will haunt us regardless of who we are. Sin will track you down and find you. God knows all that you're going through and all that you do.

With that realization in mind, I want to ask you to think for a moment about the removal. "The removal of what?" you may ask. I'm talking about the removal of your sin. God sees it and is the only One who can remove it and cleanse us through Jesus Christ. When Jesus died on the cross, He literally took all our sins upon Himself. He took everything you've ever done that was wrong. Everything you've ever said that was wrong. Everything you've ever thought that was wrong.

All were placed on Him, and He died for your sins. When you trusted Jesus as your Lord, Savior, and Master, all your sins were paid for. You are cleansed. You're free and forever saved and ready to be with God — not because of anything you did or could ever do to make that happen, but because of Jesus. You can't work off sin but you can come to faith in Jesus and your sins will be wiped away. The Bible says God takes your sins and buries them in the depths of the sea. He casts them as far as east is from west. There is no way they can ever be brought against you again.

That leads me to say just a word about the rejoicing. The rejoicing comes because the opinion of the high-tech wizard on TV is both right and wrong. He's right that if you put everything out there in the electronic world, it's indeed out there and you can't take it back — but there is a way to permanently erase your sins. God can lift your burdens, remove your sins, and fill your life with joy unspeakable and full of glory. They won't be "out there" forever after you make your decision to follow Jesus.

That is available to you today, my friend. If you've never done so, trust Jesus today. If you know Him as your Savior but have wandered away from your relationship with Him and gotten bogged down in the mire of life's burdens and guilt, come back to Him. He will refresh and renew you, remove your sins, and cleanse you today by His wonderful grace and power.

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

College News



WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY, held a tornado anniversary service Jan. 21, marking the one-year anniversary of the tornado that hit the Carey campus, resulting in over \$106 million in damages. Shown is the Carey Choral.



Artist Ben Watts of Columbia is pictured with The Great Physician sculpture he created for the **WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY** College of Osteopathic Medicine. The statue was unveiled Jan. 11 and was created at the request of President Tommy King and Judge Charles Pickering. Hattiesburg physician Randy Ross and his wife Brenda also contributed to the sculpture.

CHURCH SAFETY SEMINAR

FORT SHERMAN ACADEMY

functional approaches to protecting our churches

You will learn:

- Biblical basis / authority for church security
- How to assess risks in your facility
- Ways to mitigate your church's soft target areas
- Strategies to equip and prepare a security team
- Key techniques in verbal de-escalation
- Liability / legal concerns for teams
- Relevant policy and procedures
- Best responses for Active Shooter situations

The day-long seminars are scheduled from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. in the following locations:

March 19: 15th Avenue Baptist Church, Meridian
March 20: Hernando Baptist Church, Hernando

Visit www.mbcb.org to register!

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS

Matthew 10:27 NAS

February 8, 2018

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

IT'S 2018!



Time to apply for scholarships with the Mississippi Baptist Foundation!

Our policy, deadline, and applications have changed. Please visit our website to review the 2018 policy and submit an application before April 30.

Call us at 601.292.3210 or visit www.ms baptist foundation.org for more info.

PASTOR/LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

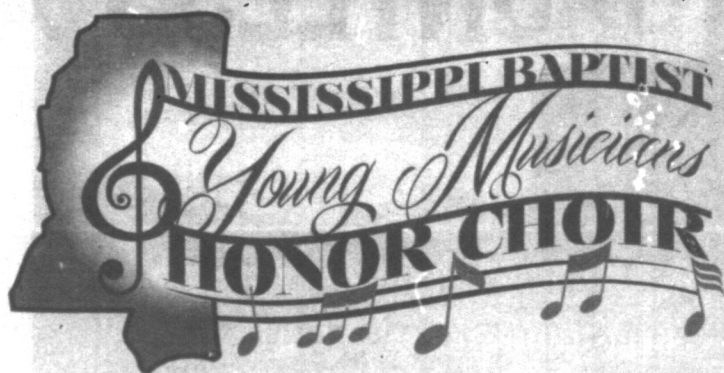
BIVOCATIONAL PASTORS – SAVE THE DATE

P/LD is excited to host Bivocational Pastors/Wives Dialogue Dinners in 2018! The purpose is to discuss new strategies for resourcing Bivo pastors throughout our state based on 2017 survey results.

Join us at one of the following locations:

- March 1 – Tupelo
- March 8 – Meridian
- April 5 – Hattiesburg
- April 12 – Flowood
- April 19 – Grenada
- April 26 – Gulfport

For additional information, contact the Pastor/Leadership Development Department at vcclary@mbcb.org or 601-292-3305.



Young Musicians Honor Choir CONCERT

Saturday, April 21, 2018

6:30 p.m.

Brandon Baptist Church

Contact the Church Music Department at 601-292-3267 for more information.

Your Group of Church Leaders

group>>>> to TEAM

Becoming A Team with a compelling

MAY 10, 2018

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

BROADMOOR
BAPTIST CHURCH

2018 CHURCH BUDGET LEADERS TRAINING

SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 2018
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, WIGGINS

For ALL Financial, Budget, Treasurers, Pastors, and Administrators in all churches in Mississippi. Contact the Stewardship Department at lleavell@mbcb.org or 601-292-3347 for more information.

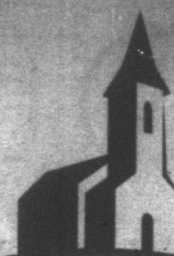


MARCH 2-3, 2018
Morrison Heights Baptist Church
Clinton, MS

REGISTER ONLINE TODAY
DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 16, 2018

Workshops will be held in all areas of media ministry: Camera Operation, Sound Mixing, Lighting, Graphic Design, Live Productions, Live Streaming, Visual Techniques, Communication Concepts and Creative Productions.

Visit <http://www.mbc.org/business-services/communication-services/witnessing-through-media> or contact Communication Services at jchen@mbcb.org for more info.



Small Church Youth Ministry Workshops

6:00 p.m. - 8:45 p.m. | Supper is served at 6:00 p.m.

- February 15, 2018
First Baptist Church
Baldwyn, MS
- February 22, 2018
LaBelle Haven Baptist Church
Olive Branch, MS
- March 1, 2018
First Baptist Church
Waynesboro, MS

For questions, contact Discipleship & Family Ministry at 601-292-3284 or visit www.tinyurl.com/2018SmallChurch to register.

MBCB CONNECT CAMPS 2018

DAUNTLESS

Central Hills Baptist Retreat

Registration begins February 1, 2018
www.mbc.org/student-connect-camp

Session 1: June 4-7

Session 2: June 7-10

Session 3: June 12-15

Please contact Tony Martin at 601-292-3217 or tmartin@mbcb.org for further information.

2018 MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST PREACHING CONFERENCE

"THE BOOK OF JOSHUA"

Register today at tinyurl.com/preach2018 and contact Pastor Leadership Development at velaryia@mbcb.org for more information.

STATE BIBLE DRILLS

Weekday Drills
2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday Drill
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 17
FBC, McComb
Emmanuel BC, Grenada

Thursday, April 19
Harrisburg BC, Tupelo
Carterville BC, Petal

Saturday, April 21
Crossgates BC, Brandon
Poplar Springs Dr,
Meridian

Tuesday, April 24
FBC, Madison
Hillcrest BC, New Albany

Thursday, April 26
FBC, Starkville
North Oxford BC, Oxford

Saturday, April 28
FBC, Clinton
(Selection Tournament)

Visit <http://www.mbc.org/bible-drill/> for more details and resources.

Contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department at tpresson@mbcb.org for more info.

Beginning Ringers Handbell Festival

February 24, 2018

Garaywa Camp & Conference Center
Clinton

Mississippi Baptist Handbell Festival

April 13-14, 2018

First Baptist Church
Raymond

Contact the Church Music Department at cwtaylor@mbcb.org or 601.292.3267 for more information.



2018 VBS Kickoff

March 23-24, 2018
Garaywa Camp & Conference Center

Friday, March 23
7:00 p.m. Worship Rally | 8:15 p.m. Breakout Sessions
Saturday, March 24
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Breakout Sessions & Expo

Visit www.mbc.org to register, or contact the Sunday School/Small Groups Department at elindlgrin@mbcb.org for more info.

Pray this day for...

February 9 - February 22, 2018

"praying at all times in the Spirit... To that end keep alert with perseverance, making supplication for all the saints..."
Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)

Pray for: **Kevin & Brenda Peacock**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through theological education & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Michael & Sarah Prewitt**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Eugenia Putnam**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through church planting.

Pray for: **Tracy Putnam**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through church planting.

Pray for: **John & Deborah Royals**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through regional office support & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Jonathan & Bethany Sharp**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting & community outreach/encounter.

Pray for: **George & Geraldine Smith**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through church planting & church/home outreach evangelism.

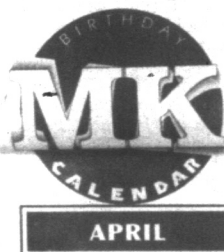
Pray for: **Thomas & Janna Smith**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through regional office support & church planting.

Pray for: **Karl & Peggy Wallace**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through mission administration & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **David & Regina White**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church planting & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Charles & Shannon Worthy**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through community outreach/encounter.

Pray for: **James & Mary Adair**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through church planting & church/home outreach evangelism.



Miss R.R.
3/2/09
Parents: J & K
Restricted

Miss Brooklyn
4/6/09
Parents: J & M
Restricted

Mr. A.S.
4/11/12
Parents: S & M
Global Resource Team

Mr. Benjamin White
4/16/12
Parents: David & Regina
American Peoples

Miss E.S.
4/26/05
Parents: S & M
Global Resource Team

Miss Lindsey Williams
4/27/01
Parents: Matt & Shea
Restricted



To Be Sent March 23, 2018, by the WMU Office

PLEASE NOTE THE TIMING! Thank you for your love and support of MKs by sending Birthday cards! Because of the sending to other countries, there is a need to get cards sent a month ahead of birthday. As soon as the list is in the Baptist Record, please send the cards and not wait until a couple of weeks before the date of the birthday. It is posted two months ahead to give time to receive cards and then to mail them a month ahead of time to insure arrival around birthday. Again, thank you for being a blessing to so many with this ministry!
NOTE: Church members may send a package of cards together; cards do not have to be sent individually to the WMU. Individual cards do not need postage stamps when sent as a package to MS WMU.
FOR SECURITY, cards will be forwarded. Please send all to: MBCH WMU MK Birthdays, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205. Please include your return address on each card envelope. MKs and their parents may wish to send you an update or note of appreciation.

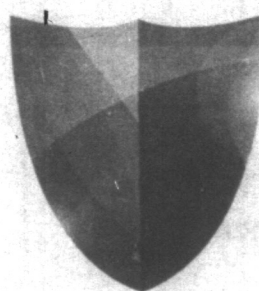


Make an eternal investment with your 2018 VBS Missions Offering.

Missions Mobilization of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board invites you to participate in the Home Building Project in Malaysia. For the 8th year in a row, we are collecting VBS offerings to build longhouses in Malaysia. Please consider setting a goal for your VBS to collect \$1,400 to provide a home for a family in Malaysia. The offerings received will purchase the building materials. Missions Mobilization will send the volunteer construction teams to provide the labor, alongside the Malaysian families.

In the past six years 608 decisions have been made for Christ and 371 homes have been built.

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/MSLonghouse> for promo materials.
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ASSISTANTS CONFERENCE
GARAYWA • MARCH 19-20, 2018

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at vcary@mbcb.org for more information.

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WORSHIP CONCERT

Sunday, February 11 @ 6 p.m.
Colonial Heights Baptist Church, Ridgeland



Contact the Church Music Department at 601.292.3267 or cwtaylor@mbcb.org for more information.

HOUSE TOPS

Miss. House advances 15-week abortion limit

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

The Mississippi House of Representatives on Feb. 2 passed the Gestational Age Act (HB 1510) that would prohibit most abortions in the state after 15 weeks gestation. If subsequently passed by the Mississippi Senate and signed into law by Governor Phil Bryant, the state will have the most restrictive abortion regimen in the country.

"The passage of HB 1510 underscores the value of all human life — the life of the unborn and the life and health of the mother. The State of Mississippi has compelling and legitimate interests in protecting the lives of all people, born and unborn," Andy Gipson of Braxton, Republican chairman of the House Judiciary B committee

who handled the bill's passage through the committee and then on the floor of the chamber, told The Baptist Record.

"If we want to help stop the 'brain drain' of young adults in Mississippi, perhaps we should start with supporting the opportunities for more children to have life at its inception," he stressed.

Gipson, a legislator since 2008, is the bivocational pastor of Gum Springs Church in Simpson Association. The attorney represents portions of Rankin and Simpson counties (District 77).

Shannon Brewer, manager of the state's sole remaining abortion clinic, Jackson Women's Health Organization on North State Street in Jackson, told WLBT-TV on Feb. 5 that the clinic, which does not perform abortions on babies 20 weeks old or

"The State of Mississippi has compelling and legitimate interests in protecting the lives of all people, born and unborn."

Andy Gipson, R-Braxton



older, saw about 200 patients last year who ranged from 15 to 20 weeks gestation.

Exceptions contained in the bill would allow abortions when the life of the mother is in danger or when the baby suffers from severe abnormalities.

Pro-lifers commended the principal author of the bill, Republican Rep. Becky Currie of Brookhaven, a registered nurse who has represented portions of Copiah, Lawrence, and Lincoln counties (District 92) since 2008.



CURRIE

"Life is a gift from God and we must cherish it," Currie told The Baptist Record. "The thought of saving over 200 babies aborted every year that are over fifteen weeks in gestational age in Mississippi is praise enough for getting this bill passed."

Opposition came mostly from House Democrats and their pro-abortion allies.

In criticizing the bill during floor debate, Democrat Rep. Adrienne Wooten of Ridgeland said, "I believe that there will be some constitutional challenge-



WOOTEN

es to this bill, ...but you know we've brought forth so many unconstitutional measures 'till I don't think it matters."

Wooten, an attorney, has represented south Jackson (District 71) since 2008.

Rep. Sonya Williams-Barnes, a Gulfport Democrat, said during the floor debate, "This is just another fancy way of telling a woman what to do with her body and when to do it." Barnes-Williams has represented Harrison County (District 119) since 2012.



BARNES

The final vote on HB 1510 was 79-31 in favor of passage, with ten House members absent or not voting and one voting present. For a list of how individual House members voted, visit tinyurl.com/1510-House-vote.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Senate in Washington, D.C., rejected an effort Jan. 29 to prohibit late-term abortions when supporters could not muster the votes to invoke cloture (cut off debate) and bring the measure to a floor vote. The U.S. House of Representatives had passed their version of the bill last October and sent it to the Senate.

The Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, S. 2311, would have banned abortions nationally on babies 20 weeks old and older.



THE WMU EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH
COMMITTEE IS RECEIVING RESUMES
FOR THE POSITION OF

**Executive
Director-Treasurer of
Woman's Missionary Union**

**Women's Ministries
of Mississippi**

Applicants must have four (4) years of college, two (2) years
seminary training and experience in local church or denomination.

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Attention: Marion Duncan
Chairman of WMU Search Committee
P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530

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NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH, MONTICELLO, MS SEEKING BIVOCATIONAL MUSIC MINISTER. Send Resumes To: 618 Carmel-New Hope Rd, Monticello, MS 39654 Ph. 601-587-2862

THOMPSON BAPTIST CHURCH, SMITHDALE, MS SEEKS A BIVOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC TO LEAD IN WORSHIP SERVICES AND ALL ASPECTS OF MUSIC. Send resume to: tbcfinancial@yahoo.com or mail to Minister of Music Resume' 5422 N Greensburg Rd., Smithdale, MS 39664.

FULL-TIME PASTOR, FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH, STURGIS, MS. Send applications/nominations to PastorSearch@friendshipsturgis.com or to Friendship BC, 5491 Craig Springs Rd, Sturgis, MS 39769. See friendshipsturgis.com for more information.

DREW BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING A BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR— Please email resume to drewbaptistchurch@gmail.com or U S mail to Drew Baptist Church, 139 S Church St., Drew, MS 38737.

MAIN STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, MENDENHALL, MS IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR. Please mail resumes to Robert Mangum, Chairman - Pastor Search Committee, 115 Pine Hill Circle, Mendenhall, MS 39114.

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CHURCH BUS FOR SALE, 2003 Ford E550 super Duty, 33 passenger, diesel, 46,122 miles in Collins, MS. Call 601-517-6889 for more information.

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SEC

cont. from p. 1

Bellevue Church in suburban Memphis and current SBC president.

■ James Merritt, pastor of Cross Pointe Church in Duluth, Ga., and a former SBC president.

■ Dan Lanier, pastor of Northcrest Church in Meridian.

■ Jim Futral, MBCB executive director-treasurer.

Worship was led by Bob Smith of Bob Smith Music in Huntsville, Al. Jeff Cleghorn, music evangelist from Bonaire, Ga., accompanied on the piano. Clarence Cooper was host pastor.

"I give our guest speakers the theme for the conference, but I don't tell them what to preach on," Lum explained. "This year our theme was 'I Am Here, Lord!' from Acts 9:10," which deals with God's call on Ananias when he was to reach out to the Apostle Paul after his Damascus road experience.

"God spoke to Ananias, and Ananias was available. God wants to do things in our lives but we need to be there when he needs us," Lum said.

Lanier used Acts 4:31 and following for his text, speaking on the essentials of a healthy church. He stated that a healthy church will have great power and great grace. "Let God fight your battles. How many have you lost? God has never lost a single one," he stressed.

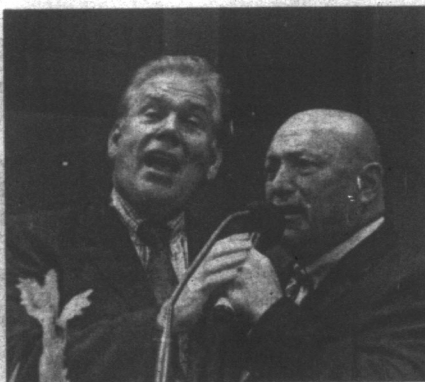
Referencing Luke 18:31 and following, Pittman identified five ultimate truths: the ultimate rebellion of the nation of Israel; the ultimate sin of the Gentiles; the ultimate act of history; the ultimate grace of God; and the ultimate mission and ultimate message.

"The ultimate act of history is the empty tomb. 'He is not here,'" Pittman said.

Catt, who was adopted as a baby, shared his very recent discoveries about his birth mother. In that context and sharing from Acts 11, he spoke about how one woman who knew his mother had tried to keep that information from him and keep him in the dark, while another woman said that he deserved to know about his mother.

"Why is the West missing out on one of the greatest movements of God in Christian history? Because we kind of like it in the dark. We want things like we want them."

Futral preached from John 4, the account of the woman at the well. There is no life without



IMPROMPTU DUET—Bob Smith (left), worship leader for the 2018 Mississippi Baptist State Evangelism Conference, invites Dan Lanier, pastor of Northcrest Church, Meridian, to share in song-leading after Lanier had preached at the conference held Jan. 28-29 at Brandon Church, Brandon. (Photo by Tony Martin)

water," he stated. He spoke about the visitors at the well; the inquisitors at the well; and the inhibitors at the well.

"The reason you would come to the well is because you have a need," he said. "The only thing that satisfies and meets needs is Jesus. He's the only source, not some blog or website or whatever."

Merritt used Acts 9:1-20 as his text. Speaking on Paul's conversion, he said that after meeting Christ a person will see the light of God's truth and receive the life of God's light.

"If Jesus was raised from the dead, nothing else mattered," Merritt said. "but if He wasn't raised from the dead then it doesn't make any difference what you believe."

The 2019 Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference will be held Jan. 27-28 at Country Woods Church, Byram.

For more information on MBCB evangelism programs, contact Lum at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3278 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 278. E-mail: dlum@mccb.org. Web site: mccb.org.

The Mississippi Baptist State Evangelism Conference is supported by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically

via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. **Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted.** Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mccb.org.

BIBL i O C I P H E R

HIE YB LYHL ZBIL XB DZ RDLY XB: LYB

MHLYBN YHLY IGL ABML XB HAGIB;

MGN D EG HARHTZ LYGZB LYDISZ

LYHL FABHZZ YDX.

VGYI BDSYL: LRBILT-IDIB

Clue: H = A

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Genesis 4:6

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004. © 2005

Need a light?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12) If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

The Testimony • Acts 22:3-8; 15-22

I love to read biographies. There is something wonderful about looking beyond the external of a person to find out what really made them tick. I am again reading the Bible through, and find myself still not able to stop when reading about the lives of the Patriarchs, Moses, or Joshua. Their stories intrigue and encourage me in my own faith. I read the book of Acts with the same excitement and find I don't want to put it down until I discover how it turns out. I am drawn to these lives because somehow, I know that their stories are connected to mine.

We all have our own story and it reveals that we are much more than what people see on the outside. Many times, when I begin to mentor a woman, she tells me that I look like I have it all together and that I could never understand where she has been. That is when I smile and begin to tell her what is underneath it all. I tell her my personal story...good, bad, and ugly. It is then we make a connection and she realizes it is only through the power of Jesus that I am still walking around. Yes, we all have a story or perhaps another term: testimony.

Paul, in Acts 22, desired to give his testimony to people who had a preconceived idea about him. As he spoke, they

listened but didn't truly understand that Paul's story was a continuation of an even greater story just like those of the Old Testament heroes of the faith lead to the story of Christ. J.R.R. Tolkien created the character Frodo for his trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings* and John Eldredge wrote in his book, *Epic*, these words about him: "Frodo could not be a hero unless he was born into a story with many chapters already played out before his own. His moment derives its weight and urgency from the moments that have come before."

Today's lesson is entitled, "The Testimony." That term conjures up different things to people. For some it merely means telling about a point of time in their lives. For others, it is telling what they know about Jesus. I desire to bring a newness to this term. Often, we in the church have reduced the "giving of our testimony," to a duty or an assignment we must complete

but not presented as an opportunity to share the story of Christ to the world. Just as Eldredge said of Frodo, our own story could not have come to pass without the many stories before us. Our responsibility is to continue the story. If we get bogged down in the mechanics we might become discouraged but if we realize we are part

(a chapter, if you will) of the whole story, it brings excitement to the task. Make no mistake, our chapter is very important, especially to those around us.

Paul's testimony to the people in Jerusalem, opened the manuscript to when he entered this epic narrative. After giving some background information, he quickly connected his story with the story of God and God's plan for his life. Paul then encouraged others to join in the story. Not everyone liked the way this book was being written and tried to stop it but Paul

persevered and so must we.

We can read about Abraham or Paul and recite parts of their chapters. We can read about C.H. Spurgeon, George Mueller, or Lottie Moon and discover how their chapters fit into the plot. But too often we have made our testimonies (our story) about us—the when and where—but not about God and His plan. I know that this is a unique way to look at our testimony, but when we are gone, how will those who are left behind will remember us? Will they know about our insides? Will our story only be that we had a great job, retired, and traveled? Will it only include where we went to church or where we lived? These are important facts but those left behind really need to know that one day we met someone on our road to "Damascus." Let them know today about the day you merged your story with a story much greater than they could ever imagine. If we do that, others might be encouraged to continue the story in their own lives and the story will continue until the Author Himself comes and closes the book.

Grace is a Bible teacher and conference speaker and is a member of First Church, Clinton.



Explore the Bible

with Cyndi Grace

I Am a Priest • 1 Peter 2:4-10

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to attend a workshop in New Jersey. Although I had flown over the Garden State a couple of times, this was my first time to have my feet on the ground in that state. The area in which I was located was breathtakingly beautiful. It was rich in history, culture, and academia. Of course, it did not take long after I opened my mouth and spoke, people realized I was not a native of the area. As some would say in the South, "You aren't from around here are you?" I was also the only Baptist attending the workshop. People wanted to talk to me; or should I say, wanted to hear me talk because of my accent. The funniest thing someone told me was I did not sound like a Mississippian, but rather a Texan. I assured them they had accents as well, and reminded them while were in an academic environment, it was a shame that not even one of them knew how to make sweet tea. For those few days, and in a small way, I represented Mississippians and Baptists. It was amusing as I broke stereotypes and challenged their misconceptions about the South.

On a much bigger stage and of more lasting importance is the fact each Christian is a representative of Christ. It is not an option of whether or not you want to be a representative. The pressing and revealing

question is: are you a good one or a bad one? In your mind, it may not be fair, but someone you know may make assumptions about Christianity based on your actions, attitude, commitment, integrity and how you treat other people. I do not say that to give you paranoia, I say that for each of us to recall our purpose.

In our biblical text, Peter wanted his audience to realize each believer has the high honor of being, "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of God's own possession," (1 Peter 2:9). We belong to God because of His gracious adoption into His large family.

Not only are we in the family, we are royalty! There are no favorites in God's family, neither are there some of greater value than others. I am often asked which McKays I belong to. Usually, the inquiring person knows of McKays in Rankin county or in Prentiss county. To my knowledge, I am not related to either group. However, the

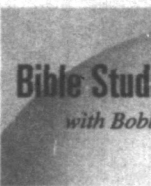
good folks in Brandon and Booneville are just as much a McKay as I am. No matter your background, last name, or heritage; if you are a child of God, you have the promise that you belong to the King!

On the other side of God's promises are our privileges. Did you know it is a privilege to serve Him and others? This service I speak of can be manifested in many ways. While no act of service in the Lord's name is more important than another, I can tell

you one that can have the greatest impact: the sharing of testimonies. 1 Peter 2:9b reveals to us we are chosen, royalty, holy and His people to

proclaim the "excellencies of God." How often does this take place in the church worship services you attend outside of the songs or sermons?

There is something about testimonies that bring renewal among God's people. Testimonies not only display the power of God, they are relatable and inspiring.



Bible Studies for Life

with Bobby McKay



A couple of weeks ago I preached on the familiar story of David and Goliath. David never feared Goliath due to the fact of his faith in God. His confidence came because of what God had already brought him through (and rescued him from) in his young life. A lion and a bear had both posed a threat to the sheep David had cared for, and with God's help, David killed them both. For David, Goliath was just another avenue to display the power and provision of God. The missing ingredient in many churches are the opportunity for the members to share what God is doing in their lives. Ask your pastor to plan a testimony service and I promise you it will be a powerful worship service you won't soon forget.

My friends, take seriously and enthusiastically the role you have as representatives of Christ. How you and I represent Christ will be our gateway to our witness. No doubt, we all have some things to seek God's help with in our attempts to represent Him well. Start by taking a long look at your attitude and how you respond to adversity. And for goodness sake, know how to make sweet tea!

McKay is pastor of Harperville Church, Harperville.

INVESTMENTS

cont. from p. 1

"Volatility can alarm investors, but it's prudent to stay calm in periods like this. Back during the Brexit vote, when British voters elected to leave the European Union, those who stayed calm and didn't overreact did fine. It's always prudent to focus on long-term asset allocation and remain calm."

Spika said active management firms like GuideStone

are thought by many to be better suited for volatile markets, which give sub-advisers a better chance to identify companies that are undervalued.

GuideStone President O.S. Hawkins echoed Spika's assessment.

"Market fluctuations will always occur, but long-term retirement investors must keep their eye focused on their goals and not short-term fluctuations," Hawkins said. "Focus on diversification, your objectives, and your time horizon, the time

between now and when you need your money, and less on the day-to-day headlines and market swings."

During 2017, all three major equity market indices — the Dow Jones Industrial Average, the S&P 500 and the NASDAQ — set record highs more than 60 times. The Dow climbed 28.1%, the S&P 500 was up 21.8%, and the NASDAQ rose 29.6%.

When dealing with a period of volatility, GuideStone suggests four principles for investors to keep in mind:

- Always focus on your long-term objectives, not your emotions. Specifically regarding retirement participants, these assets are to serve your needs for a long period of time. Make sure your objectives and actions are consistent with your time horizon.

- Avoid making impulsive decisions. "Guard against making ad-hoc or emotion-driven changes in your portfolio," Hawkins said. "Making changes based on short-term market moves is almost a guarantee for failure as it promotes buying high and selling low."

- Don't count losses (or gains). Consistent contributions to a retirement plan provide investors a systematic way of taking advantage of investment opportunities as markets ebb and flow.

- Maintain realistic expectations about market behavior. Financial markets in the short term tend to fluctuate in response to social, political, and economic events but historically the markets stabilize and return to profitability over the long term, focusing on the underlying fundamentals.

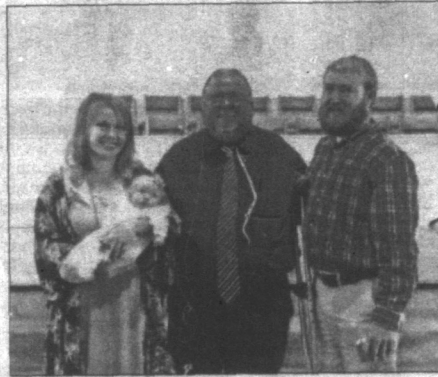
Just for the Record



The children of **WILLIAMSVILLE CHURCH, WILLIAMSVILLE**, recently presented a Christmas cantata. Shown are the children and their leaders.



FAIR RIVER CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN, held their annual senior adult Christmas supper with special musical guests Chris and Sherry Turnage. Shown are pastor Jay Anderson and the Turnages.



NEW LIBERTY CHURCH, MORTON, held a baby dedication in January. Pictured left to right are Jamie & Taylor Nolle Anthony, pastor Paul Smith, and Jay Anthony.



STRONG HOPE CHURCH, WESSON, held a program honoring veterans buried in the Strong Hope Cemetery as part of the Wreaths Across America on Dec. 17. Pictured left to right are Jean King, Robin Risher, Brigadier General Glenn D. Beasley (R), guest speaker, and Carolyn Butler. After the program, wreaths were laid at the graves of 96 veterans by friends and family.



Pastor Bendon Ginn, **LITTLE BAHALA CHURCH, WESSON**, is shown presenting Brett Smith a New Testament during a baby dedication. He has had perfect attendance since he was born Dec. 21, 2017. His mother is Rebecca Smith.



MCCALL CREEK CHURCH, FRANKLIN COUNTY, ordained Jantsen Touchstone as a minister of the gospel on December 23, 2017. Shown are Emory May, Harold Anderson, Touchstone, Amy Touchstone, Ronnie Touchstone, James Kirkland, and Elzie Chance.



MEADOWVIEW CHURCH, STARKVILLE, licensed Brian Thrasher and Brian Lindner into the ministry. Shown are Josh Buford, Thrasher, Linder, and pastor Jason Middleton.



WAYSIDE CHURCH, VICKSBURG, held an ordination service Feb. 4. Shown are pastor Chris Williams, Henry Muirhead Jr., and Roy Blissett. Those ordained were Norman Standifer, Jack Muirhead, Oscar Dougherty, and David Crist.



RONNIE & BEVERLY COTTINGHAM of Jus' Jesus Ministries, Inc.

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- One-Day Events
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Upcoming Event: Gospel Music Hymn Sing
March 24 at Agricola Baptist Church, Lucedale

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STRONG HOPE CHURCH, WESSON, collected over 650 blankets to be delivered to four nursing homes for veterans in December. Robin Risher, pastor.